Cage Bird

Observations on Cage Bird

Sat Aug 24 -

no molt progress can be noted in the wings - the middle coverts although fat all term were starting - (at either end) have gone no further - neither have greater coverts. The marginals however are progressing outward and all in region of wrist now.

Cat 10 am a small white mouse - about 10-12 grams was (?) placed in cage (not sure of weight of mouse but was size of small guinea pig). After watching it more or less for about 15 sec approached by way of lower perch to within 2 ft of then quietly to bird with one or two hops caught it across the neck a little behind head - I am fairly sure engaged of talons and at once released the mouse shrieking and lying on its side - again clipped across back of head and killed - mouse silent and limp -. Dragged mouse around for several minutes - tried to tear at it but did not break skin. Worked chiefly in

region of ~~forehead~~ limbs and head
Carried it to impeding railes
— flew on board 2' with it.
Could not swing it and impale
it. Several times held it in
left foot and picked readily but
lost hold soon and returned with
beak. Would shift position
mouse by biting broke and catching
again in different place. ~~Took~~
~~After 20 m~~ held it once in
right foot after usually uses
left.

After 20 minutes left mouse
on floor and chased ~~ants~~ ants
in cage — returned to mouse —
then to ants — several times
doing this & finally leaving mouse
no more being productive of
I picked mouse up — Swope
was very watchful of his catch.

At no time did he ~~attend~~ attend to
mouse & hold with foot
while he ate. In fact have
never seen strike of any sort
aimed at object to grasp it
against of limbs. Blue jays
will do this.

I placed mouse on nail and
could not induce him attempt —.
finally separately head which
he had almost accomplished

though he had not broken the side. That he took and tried to gulp at least 15 times each time giving up and spitting up to start over. Twice he left & dropped it but retrieved it though circuitously. Finally succeeded in losing it into a single big gulp which he downed rapidly. — then at about 10:30. Soon after he took some pieces off the nose when it slung and fell back & all.

At 12:00 noon all for quarter of nose was gone but a pile of entrails beneath had been extracted and discarded — out of this mass was 1.0 grams worm.

At 2:20 all of nose was gone and a dark very moist pellet in bottom of cage — wt when pulled 1.1 grams. Pellet all hair & bone 3.4 cm long — 1 cm diam. Metabolisms not separated but soft parts & all swallowed gone. — not examined in detail but preserved.

at 3.0 PM

Bird was weighed and found to be 47.5 g. It was hungry and so fed steak which after two minutes brought weight to 50.7. Four droppings were taken 3 large & one very small. At 4.0 PM is asleep.

Aug 26 Mon.

notes taken by Virginia Milby: —

9:10 House mouse in cage; bird flutters wings.

9:11 jabs at mouse — mouse squeaks, crawls up cage.

Shrike flutters wings — jumps flies back and forth after mouse & ~~grabs~~ grabs by tail — mouse runs, breaking loose (- Seth reports that it held mouse with foot over tail and jabbed)

9:12 jabs with beak (misses) - facially "kills"

9:12½ - mouse dead

9:13 Picks up mouse walks up to perch — flies to another perch — to another — flies around with it between the various perches in cage

9:14½ Lays mouse on floor

9:15 Picks it up - to perch - tries to place in crotch between bars at ~~corner~~ corner of cage

9:17½ Flies around with it again then flies in corner (just laying on bar I suppose)

9:18 - Takes it out of corner — ~~9:19~~ holds with foot over perch - lays resting across perch

9:19 in beak — drops it 9:19½

looks at it, flies down & picks up string

9.20 Goes to mouse - picks it up - carries to corner - all the time - bring with the beak

9.23 - Picks up & tries to pull head of legs off - Squashed the skull - could hear it crack.

9.25 Leaves it

9.31 Picks up mouse ~~in co~~ wedges in corner of cage.

Shortly after this I watched him succeed in hanging the mouse on a nail and and ~~he~~ one ripped it to pieces - The head and feet. In this instance the entire mouse digestive tract and all was eaten.

Sept 6

He has been fed Mice many times now and see they are killed always goes to a curtain nail for at least the first hanging. He will kill Rattus norvegicus, House mice white and normal but is afraid currently of a full size Cavia porcellus. He shakes after it but jumps back after as the strikes and ~~does~~ loses the power of his stroke. The mice turn on him

and he seems afraid. Most of the time the Peregrines run rapidly and he follows with difficulty due to his impaired flight.

Today we placed a moderately sized pigeon in the cage (which he was very hungry — he chased repeatedly and struck at it hit the mouse once or twice but so gradually to slow down the mouse. We let him stay hungry to see if this would prompt him to chase but although he frequently tried he was not successful. Finally Barry entered the mouse — left him in the pen and the shrike made bold to get him. The shrike had gone most of the day without food (until this time 1:30 o'clock) and was very "vicious" screeches belligerently at anyone passing and when a hand was placed in the cage jumping and pecking at the fingers. The female Peregrine was catching 500 — an amount of 12 grams/weight at least — I should judge.

The last few days several of us have remarked on his increased screeching — although he still begs some (in a flapping shiver (grand adults do — (Peregrine Canyon bird) — he is finding more & more to scream over when hungry.

His legs have lately an increase in power so it seems although

(Insert)

Aug 29 – notes by V O'Reilly –

~~8:40~~ 9:10 mouse in cage – grabbed back with beak front feet of head 2013 times + the mouse turned over and died.

Hung on nail by 9:50 – the lower jaw by 10:10. All all four parts by 10:40

This has been going on for some time

Tonight while swallowing a piece of meat or attempting to be made some 25 or more attempts - he was outside of cage & could find no suitable spot. He tried to find a place but failing gulped repeatedly with great perspiration - ½ hours time. After I could hear him gagging and then saw him do a new stunt a few times - something I have never seen or heard of - He reached up with his foot (right) & actually dragged to meat out of his throat where it was evidently pretty tightly wedged. This means was accomplished only after about sixteen or eighteen motions failed. It was deemed at least six times.

Matt seems to be taking new stunt so to speak. Two central tail feathers were noted missing in about a week ago - Gently they are started pushing thru. They are nearly equal although one, the right is longer. They have now extended the old stubs of the tail feathers the upper tail coverts are now molting ~~in~~ about simultaneously ~~natural order although in general plan~~ enter not. New feathers underneath a dark brown but have more of the dark brown band of the juvenile feathers. The body molt is quite noticeable on the

hind neck. The breast is now heavily feathered. The middle coverts are irregular & slow - I judge abnormal although a few right new ones have come in the last few days. The right ~~wing~~ is rather abnormal - feathers ~~wing~~ at a right or 45 degree angle to general plane of ~~wing~~ wing in couple of distal secondaries - the shafts of which I pulled.

The ~~right~~ left wing shows a number of short big & the greater coverts out. Se 12B which I pulled early ~~all these~~ have come in with odd grayish patches on side. Those I pulled Feather shows return to adult or juv type as normal in color. Shaft looks like there might be a ~~pigmented~~ new growth of the "stump". - Tail however shows a very faint buff coat. 2d tips. One primary no 7 is coming in new & may mean ~~or~~ primary moult is starting. Tail feathers 2 left & 3 right were pulled dropped today.

Left 7 — Big bay today split up a fallout resulting I think all from one. Rucksack ~~flying~~ fed at 9 45 - sent in Cop then - at 12:00. Wt when sent & very worst 1.5 g. One bone looked reddish on afternoon surface.

Sept 9, 1929

At 920 a white mouse weighing 12.0g was placed in the cage. Quick killing and impaling followed — he seemed hungry having had only a little fine meat yesterday evening.
Entestine and all was eaten. Only a small part of the mouse remained after lunch 1 o'clock.
Pellets were not found until about 3 o'clock when one was seen to be spit up after he had started to swallow some bone meat just then given him. The meat was well in his throat a small piece too — then it was suddenly ejected to [illegible] impaling hook & then spit up pellet. At this time another fresh pellet was discovered in cage. The bird at once proceeded to gulp the originally rejected piece and took all several other pieces. At four o'clock a number of rather coarsely broken bone bones were given and at 5/15 a poorly formed pellet containing thicken was found — very fresh. Total weight of bone meat fed was 6 grams. 1.7 grams of pellets ejected plus 0.2 g of [illegible] — uncertain. This at 5 20 P.M.
522 — a 7.6 gr Chuckwalla lizard placed in cage — killed almost immediately with first jab of beak. There was no hesitancy and although mouse moved slowly he jumped with assurance and rapidity.

The entire head was gulped by 5:26 — it had been crushed and pulled out not torn apart.

Tail feathers R 2 is out R 3 & L 2 show a pin feather about 30 mm long.

Wt. at 5:35 — 48.6

Excretion between 920 and ~~4:40~~ 5:20 — 8 hrs — was about — very close to — 48 or 6 per hour Each involves a loss of about .25 g by wt average. so grams and one half about per hour — total for eight hours 12 grams

gain wt (~~4:40~~ 5:00)

12 g mouse	11.25 g excreta
~~16~~ g owl meat	1.7 g pellets
18 g taken in	13 g lost + respiratory losses

Sept 29.

wt and length of tail feather no 2 right hand but left for about 2 day intervals since the last writing

Eye observation of about a week ago gave me a suggestion as to the reason for the frequent irregularity in the tail molt. The bird was dropped into the cage and did not catch himself so that he ~~sat~~ hit on his back against the curving rear

the bottom of the cage and was seen to catch two of the outermost stubby jr feathers in the wing. As he turned over these slid out very readily.

It was then remembered that in pulling old broken jr inner secondaries (tertials) that recently they came out without any appreciable force being exerted — quite in contrast to other feathers or feathers of the same area plucked earlier in the season. It is fairly certain in my mind that there is a marked weakening of the attachment of the feathers previous to shedding some period in advance of this process.

If not subjected to any stresses the feathers remain in spot and come out in a regular order — at least as concerns the larger wing & tail feathers. Irregularity is easily provoked however by any slight unusual disturbance of the feathers during the period of the softening of the attachment. This explains the irregularity in the tail of the cage bird and accounts for the erroneous sheltering in order noted when trying to establish the detailed course of the moult.

On the present date 5 & 6 possibly 4 & 5 on the right show as fair feathers (on a long 3 left is in like condition (but 5 & 6 ♂ perhaps 4 & 5 left are still old. I think 6 has been broken

out but the bird is so active as to make close inspection difficult. The outer tail feathers being more subject to caldury in bushes & giving are most subject perhaps to premature extraction.

The last few days I have been impressed with the general power of the shrike. — For example hanging upside down on a perch and feeding continually when teased with a finger or other pointed object. I am inclined to believe that he enjoys ~~com~~ combat and teasing as he is often the agressor in his jabs and could easily restrain his fury to play and fight it out so it appears.

Several times the bird has been placed out in the sunshine in the small cage. This excites him considerably and he utters continuously from beginning to end — yet never gets frantic as he used to before Opie & I pay. Once when brought light to the room after such an experience he uttered a series of clear notes — like whistles. The series was then repeated. The quality was unlike that of any bird note I have heard in the wild. (The certain clear but very loud notes.)

As the secondary coverts, which were cut as a septs, are coming in and as the tail area increases in plain surface - the flight ability is increasing. He can now maintain a level for 12 feet or so. This is true regardless of his cut which at times had reached 55.9%.

The left wing is almost perfect except for some frayed terminations. The right wing which for so long has lacked many feathers & which has produced some twisted & aborted secondaries due to pulling is now growing these fairly normal secondaries beside the three remaining & give promise of improved flight.

The head has lost almost all superficial tissue & its feathers but there are still a few obscured below the longer tissues of 1st year plumage. The breast & back are very dark - brownish - the returns of juvenile characters. Not the heavy gray breast & back of autumn but deep in coat.

The feathers now coming in on the breast are less dark narrower as near as I can tell and I get the effect of a dilution of the rich almost chocolate of immaculation

which first appeared. This is in complete accordance with the condition seen in skins — particularly [illegible]. I am fairly sure that there is no loss of these brown feathers but rather a detention of their effect. — This question must further checking however. At present the chief growth of new [illegible] breast feathers seems to be on the extreme margin of the breast tracts — the feathers which are directed decidedly laterally from the tracts. I hardly believe though that the different zones in the tract are very different in color otherwise a banded appearance would result. However there is a tendency for a lighter colored median streak

Night before last a very active and large Cormorant was found in the cage of the skins at the time was not hungry — this in the afternoon. As the evening entered increased but the fish was distinctly afraid of the mouse as it turned — circling about it like a cork fishing. But very cautious about actually jabbing at the mouse. The mouse would give a squeaking [illegible]

back as the shrike got too close upon which the shrike would at once back off.

After a time the shrike started giving a low screech - what I call a worrying note. I have heard wild shrikes give this while they have just ~~caught~~ cornered - a bird on the desert did this while it had a big lizard cornered in the tin yard. Things. It seems to indicate both ~~forced~~ provocation at being thwarted and defiance. It ~~is~~ somehow reminds me of a mocker note given while attacking a cat. - Indicate if a situation a little bigger than can be handled.

Saturday.

A detailed investigation of the breast feathers today showed conclusively that the new feathers are very much lighter on the above than the early "pink" brown feathers. Most of these feathers are on the edge of the breast - at least these are the easiest to see yet others in the midst of the breast are also coming in light. No new dorsal feathers could be found.

The phylogenetic significance of these observations should be followed up

Nov. 26

Placed Wren (Vigors) in the cage - bird had broken foot.

Bird flew into corner. Shrike flew down close - Wren flew across cage - Shrike pursued and prospected with beak hitting near head - Shrike showed no fear as does with mouse when attacking. Wren flew Shrike returned to perch and then flew on to taken in corner. Perched on tail - grasping - ~~with~~ while stood erect and hit at head bird cries - several times - another perk as bird struggles held by foot of shrike. Shrike ~~waits~~ waited several ~~min~~ seconds then deals blow on back of head that kills completely. - Carries at once to perch. 10 min later head pulled off.

For the past month the bird has been displaying a sort of sex behavior ~~to~~ toward Cowley. First instance about month ago - molt practically complete at the time - flew to shelves above Cowley - squatted - feet on or ground keeping it from side to side + fluttered

wings up. tail extended and slightly up. Cry of desire

Coupling came close - and snapped at fingers not in usual fighting manner. If 3 approach attitude is lost. Cock approaches is resumed. This attitude since then is shown toward coupling invariably. Bird tries to get out of cage & go to his table. Same treatment shown toward Grimm and Miss Chaffin.

Some time ago bird swallowed end of long strip of meat 4 inches. Could not cut off remaining part and held in mouth this way for about 2-3 minutes. After this time it attacked it with food after much effort. — Lower ½ inch of meat was brown stained surface slightly corroded. Smelled oddly & color stained my hands a pale yellow brown has low nicotine or HCN3.